

and meet with the military leadership in Taiwan, a democratic entity.

It is only a matter of common sense that in the event of a crisis—a crisis now more likely—we should be able to communicate with the Taiwanese military—the people we may be called to defend.

Opponents of this bill claim that ambiguity is good. But there is nothing ambiguous about the Chinese position. The Chinese White Paper even specifically opposed the Taiwan Security Enhancement Act.

I suggest we should not be ambiguous about our support for democracy in Asia, nor should we apologize to China for helping Taiwan to defend itself.

I believe China has made itself clear on the Taiwan issue. So should we.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from Illinois.

TRIBUTE TO JEANNE SIMON

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise today on the floor of the Senate to pay tribute to a great friend who passed away on Sunday. Her name was Jeanne Simon, the wife of my friend and former colleague in the House, my predecessor in the Senate, Senator Paul Simon of Illinois. Jeanne Simon passed away in the early morning hours on Sunday in her home in Makanda, IL, in the southern part of our State.

She had been suffering for several months from a brain tumor, and the end was obvious when I last saw her a few weeks ago. As Paul Simon told me when I called and asked if we could get together: Her spirits are good. He was certainly right. We laughed over dinner and reminisced over old political experiences and had a great time, as we did for over 30 years in similar meetings and dinners.

Jeanne Simon was an extraordinary person. She was one of the first women to serve in the Illinois House of Representatives. She was a graduate of Northwestern Law School and served as an assistant State's attorney when very few women were involved in the profession, let alone as prosecutors.

She met another young legislator when she served in Springfield, IL, a State representative named Paul Simon. The two hit it off and decided to get married in 1960. Jeanne Simon put her legislative and professional career aside to become a wife and a mother and to become a help mate, not just at home but in the political career of her husband, Paul Simon.

President Clinton was wont to say when he was elected: America got two—buy one, get one free—in terms of the First Lady and her contribution to the Nation. We felt the same in the State of Illinois. Whenever we looked at the Simon package, it was Paul and Jeanne Simon and the kids wrapped up in a very attractive package with a

polka dot bow tie. Time after time, election after election, the people in Illinois turned to Paul Simon as Congressman, as Lieutenant Governor, and finally as Senator and bought the package.

Politics is a game of individual statistics. We talk about who won, who lost. In sports we talk about team statistics, but when it came to the Simons, we were dealing with a team statistic. We knew that whenever Paul Simon was there fighting for Illinois and the causes in which he believed, Jeanne Simon was right at his side.

She had special passions and commitments to literacy and to education. She served as chair of the National Commission on Libraries, and one of the last things I ever heard from her was a call late in the session last year: Check on that appropriation for libraries. She was committed to it.

Jeanne Simon was the kind of person, too, whom I trusted in terms of her judgment. She was honest and forthright and you knew when she stood up for a cause it was because she really believed in it.

How many people, men and women, in Illinois political life were inspired and encouraged by Jeanne Simon over the years. She has left a great legacy. I consider myself to be one of the beneficiaries of that legacy. Now that she has passed away, we can reflect on the fact that even as a wife and mother of a great politician like Paul Simon, she left an enduring contribution to the State of Illinois and to the Nation.

Jeanne Simon will be missed, and many in this Chamber who knew her and worked with her on so many important issues will appreciate, as I have, what a great and enduring legacy she left with her life.

I yield the floor.

Several Senators addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from Ohio.

BIENNIAL BUDGETING

Mr. VOINOVICH. Mr. President, 2 weeks ago, the administration released its budget for fiscal year 2001—its last and its biggest, totaling \$1.8 trillion and proposing a whole host of new programs.

So begins our annual budget process.

From now until September 30, Congress will conduct dozens of hearings and hold countless meetings, while members of both Houses deliver innumerable speeches and spend long hours of debate over every subtle nuance of the Federal budget process.

Over the next 8 months, Congress will consider a budget resolution, a budget reconciliation package and as many as 13 separate appropriations bills—the latter only if we do not combine those appropriations bills into one massive spending bill, as has been the practice in recent years.

By the time Congress adjourns—currently scheduled for October 6—a ma-

ajority of votes taken in the Senate will relate to the budget process.

Indeed, as my colleague, the distinguished chairman of the Budget Committee, Senator DOMENICI, has pointed out, 73% of the Senate's votes in 1996 were budget-related, 65% in 1997, and 51% in 1998. It is no wonder—each year, it is quite common for the same subject to be voted upon 3 or 4 times during the course of the entire budget process.

Despite the inordinate amount of time and effort that Congress will put into fashioning a budget that will meet our Nation's spending needs in a fiscally responsible way, a veto threat still looms on each of the appropriations bills if spending does not approach what the President wants.

At that point, high-stakes negotiations between the Congress and the President will ensue. In an effort to avoid a Government shutdown—and the blame that goes with it—these negotiations inevitably yield a spending compromise that neither Congress nor the President particularly likes, but both agree is necessary.

It is a heck of a way to run a railroad, but what is really unbelievable is this whole process is repeated each year.

I say enough is enough. It's time to bring rationality to our nation's budget process.

It's a fact that Congress spends too large a portion of its time debating and voting on items related to the Federal budget. Meanwhile, most other Congressional functions are not given proper attention.

We need to reestablish our priorities so we may effectively do the work of the people, make sure that the Federal Government is running at peak efficiency and deliver value, which is quality service for the least amount of money.

I believe we have an excellent opportunity to do that this year.

One of the first bills I cosponsored when I became a Senator was a measure introduced by Senator PETE DOMENICI that would establish a 2-year budget—just like we have in about 20 States including the State of Ohio. I believe enactment of this bill, S. 92, will provide an important tool in the efficient use of Federal funds while strengthening Congress' proper oversight role.

Because Congress produces annual budgets, Congress does not spend nearly as much time as it should on oversight of the various Federal Departments and agencies due to the time and energy consumed by the budget resolution, budget reconciliation, and appropriations process.

Not only is this a problem for Congress, but each executive branch agency and department must spend a significant amount of its time on each annual budget cycle.

Again, as my colleague, Senator DOMENICI, pointed out in his statement on S. 92, the executive branch spends 1